

RACIAL HARMONY FORUM

**JANUARY 9, 2002
STOCKTON CIVIC AUDITORIUM
525 NORTH CENTER STREET
STOCKTON CALIFORNIA**

The Racial Harmony Forum began on the above date at 6:05 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

John Armistead, Rector of Annunciation Cathedral representing Bishop Stephen Blaire, Diocese of Stockton
Chief Edward Chavez, Stockton Police Department
Roger Coover, Pres./Publisher, *The Record*
Sheriff Baxter Dunn, SJC Sheriff's Dept.
Rev. Bob Hailey, Unity Southern Baptist Church
Dennis Lee, President, Central Valley Asian-American Chamber of Commerce
Mark Lewis, City Manager, City of Stockton
Janet Lilly, President, African-American Chamber of Commerce
Scott Mitchell, Youth Advisory Commissioner
Judge Bill Murray Jr., Superior Court of San Joaquin County
George Ridler, Superintendent, Stockton Unified School District
Jose Rodriguez, Exec. Director, Council for the Spanish Speaking Director, Council for the Spanish Speaking (Concilio)
Sister Lois Silva, O.P., St. Joseph's Medical Center
Rick Wentworth, Superintendent, San Joaquin County Schools
Doug Wilhoit, CEO, Greater Stockton, Chamber of Commerce
Willie Douglas, NAACP
Ervin Jefferson for Bill Huyett, Superintendent, Lodi Unified School District
Randy Ruby, Executive Director, Builders Exchange of Stockton
Brittany Hood, Youth Advisory Commissioner
John Rieckenwald, Superintendent, Manteca Unified School District
Jose Rivera, Administrator, Kaiser Permanente
Breanne Robertson, Youth Advisory Commissioner
Gary Gillis, Chief, City of Stockton Fire Department
Jason Gwasdoff, Rabbi
Mark Bromme, Chief of Police, San Joaquin Delta College
Frank Farrell, Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce

INTRODUCTION

Mayor Podesto thanked everyone for being present at this meeting focusing on Jobs and Employment. He said there will be further meetings with the faith community and the education community to respond to issues raised. Law enforcement will be the focus of another meeting. After findings are compiled, resolutions will be crafted to address these issues, probably in April.

The following groups' representatives made presentations before the Task Force:

NOTE: The Mayor's microphone did not pick up his comments and questions during the first half of the meeting.

Task Force Member Frank Farrell spoke on two programs of the Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce. He explained that the Stockton Chamber Apprenticeship Program provides employment opportunities for CalWorks clients in San Joaquin County through training and placement. The Business Education Alliance Program is a collaborative between school districts and the business community. This program is to address workforce needs as dictated by employers. Both programs address workforce preparation through educational programs and workforce development through the Stockton Chamber Apprenticeship Program.

Task Force Member, Doug Wilhoit representing the Chamber spoke of problems encountered with CalWorks clients, such as drug use and lack of personal responsibility. He said that the Chamber is working with the schools to help students develop a mindset to become an employee or an employer. He reported that yesterday the Chamber had approximately thirty people waiting for interviews and many said that this was the first time they have had a chance for a job interview.

Mr. Farrell said that employability skills and individual personal responsibility are stressed in the school districts. The Chamber's goal is to employ as many people as possible. At the Fall Institute of the Weber Institute of Applied Sciences, the business community came onto the campus to teach two weeks curriculum including ethics, civics, checkbook management, finances. He said that the SCAMP Program allows clients to go through a series of interviews that are reviewed, and they are counseled for apprenticeships with employers who train them in their business, which hopefully leads to jobs.

Task Force Member George Ridler of SUSD said that the Weber Institute offers courses in technology, health professions, and automotive, all very connected to the academic program. While learning a vocation, students are also involved in the academic program and learning job skills. Students can also earn college credits. He acknowledged that at times the academic and industry focuses can be at odds. He said that the Weber Institute's program is very well coordinated with industry.

Task Force Member John Riechenwald of Manteca Unified School District reported that they have an ROP (Regional Occupational Program) to prepare students, and an adult program that high school students can attend. They also have career paths, and early on students take inventories to see where their interests lie. Job shadowing is done with upper classmen. There is a Career Center at each high school staffed by a professional to review options after graduation, such as the military, a four-year college, trade school, etc.

McKinley Lloyd, Director of Personnel Services for the City of Stockton, summarized the recruitment and selection process for the City and recent efforts to obtain a more diverse work force. He pointed out that much of what the City does is governed by the City Charter and Civil Service Rules and Regulations. Speaking on recruitment and outreach, he stated that the City has fourteen departments with about 1,700 budgeted positions and about 430 job classifications. There are Civil service Rules and Regulations for Police and Fire employees and Miscellaneous Rules and Regulations that cover most other employees. Where and how the City recruits is determined by the level of the position to be filled. There are entry level, professional/technical, and management positions. Entry level positions, such as Parks Worker I, Library Aide, Office Assistant I, are recruited at the local level. Outreach is primarily advertisement in *The Record*, community organizations, churches, and other government agencies. The City's 24-Hour Jobline and the City's web site are also utilized, along with community events. For professional/technical and some management positions, recruitment may be on a statewide basis. Outreach would also be expanded to include other publications and resources, such as the California Job Journal, Hispanic Hotline, Black Careers Now, Asian-Pacific Careers, etc. There are specific publications for certain positions, e.g. water, engineering and libraries.

Mr. Lloyd reported that the City participates in approximately 15 to 20 job fairs annually. This past year, recruitment was also done at Black Family Day and Cinco de Mayo. Several web sites are also utilized, and hard-to-fill positions may be recruited on a nation-wide basis. He briefly described the selection process. Applications are reviewed by a Personnel Analyst; and, once the candidates are determined to be qualified, they participate in a series of examinations. There are written examinations, generally multiple choice and/or true/false. Oral examinations may be conducted by a panel of two or three people that are diverse and representative of the community as much as possible. A performance examination may be required, e.g. typing, driving, welding. There may also be an assessment center, or series of examinations that may be oral and written. These are usually used for management level positions. Once the list is established, the eligibles are ranked in order based on final scores. They are then certified to the hiring department with the names of the top five candidates for an open examination and the top three for promotional. The hiring department may select from any one of those candidates. In most instances, this entails just a physical examination and then a hire date is given.

Mr. Lloyd spoke of a recent recruitment for firefighters that entailed amendment of residency rules for police and fire. Five preference points were given to residents of San Joaquin County. A billboard was placed on the back of six buses for a month. Ads were also displayed at theaters, and aired on radio, including a Spanish radio station. Electronic sign boards were used, posters were posted at churches and businesses, and direct mail and calling was done to health clubs to encourage females to apply. The rules were also changed to provide for lateral entry firefighter but this has not yet been implemented. There is a Firefighting Recruitment Task Force that will meet to further evaluate the recruitment process. Advertising has been expanded, and brochures were mailed to candidates and are also available in the Department. The

web site has been updated and it is hoped to expand online applications. Mr. Lloyd said that outreach is also done through the Summer Youth, college work study, the Weber Technical Institute, and youth doing job shadowing through the Private Industry Council.

City Manager Mark Lewis said that encouraging diversity in the work place is a high priority for the City and many ideas are being explored within a fairly old style Civil Service System and Charter. He said that safety chiefs have been trying to have their work force more directly reflect the demographics of the community.

Fire Chief Gary Gillis said that improvement has to start at the top and the Fire Chief is committed to a workforce reflective of the community. He said that testing to become a firefighter is so competitive that applicants drive all over the State and become very good at taking tests. As a result, the workforce becomes mostly white male. It was decided to give those in the community a helping hand with the five-point preference. He noted that there will be a tremendous turnover in the Department over the next two or three years because of an enhanced retirement system. He said that recruitment efforts would involve going into the ethnic communities and making people believe that they can be Stockton firefighters.

Mr. Lewis said that establishing local fire and police academies to introduce local residents to the concepts of fire and police service has been discussed. Lateral entry is another focus.

Police Chief Chavez explained that the lateral applicant is one who is probably best defined as a journey level person with experience in other police departments. There has been moderate success with lateral entry. He noted that the Police Department has a very aggressive School Resource Office program. A Police Academy Community Service Program at Bear Creek orients students to a career in law enforcement, providing law enforcement-related courses in addition to the regular curriculum. Chief Chavez agreed with the City Manager that it is difficult for a department head to work within the confines of the present Civil Service Rules and Regulations and the City Charter. He said that, in his opinion, one who passes the entry level test has met the minimum qualifications and how one comes out on a list should not be a determining factor, as there is a probationary period and training programs. He said that qualified people are being lost because of the present process.

Chief Gillis said that a shadowing program is being offered. He reported that the physical agility test is limiting many candidates and it is important to look at the requirement factors and what is important for job duties.

Mr. Wilhoit noted that there is an issue before the voters for the March election that, if passed, would reduce revenues and would cause the loss of a School Resource Officer who has taught Police Science at Edison and Lincoln High Schools for fifteen years. He said that the Resource Officer is the best way to get young people interested in public service. He said that voters have a responsibility to not only maintain, but improve this program.

Stockton Police Department Officer Ken Robinson, recruiter for the Department, referred to a census of the City and a graph of the racial composition of the Police Department. He agreed that the Department does not reflect the City but this is not due to lack of effort. He said that the problem with hiring lies with the background process of the Police Department. He said that the background process is stringent and the best way to avoid background problems is to start at an early age, before negative things occur. The SROs serve as mentors in elementary and high schools. The Police Department also offers a Junior Cadet program. The Cadets interact with the Police Department and provide free community services. The Stockton Police Youth Academy also keeps youth on the right path. There is a High School Academy for Criminal Justice and Community Service to help youth make the right choices and be productive in the Community. The Police Department attends job fairs and has implemented Community Oriented Policing to help the community and the Department work together. He described other recruitment efforts as outlined earlier by Mr. Lloyd. He said that more applicants are needed who as youth are willing to set goals for adulthood. Officer Robinson pointed out that the Department is competing with other agencies at job fairs and applicants are comparing location and salary. He said that he tells applicants about the diversity of the City and its quality of life, along with its central location and the Delta. He said that the affordable housing in the area is also a drawing point. He closed by stating that the Police Department has something to offer everyone.

Officer Robinson asked that community leaders who identify someone with an interest in law enforcement notify the Police Department and encourage them to pursue their interests. Young adults should be encouraged to get to know officers as role models. Youth should be encouraged to make good decisions now so they are not haunted by past mistakes.

Judge Bill Murray asked if there is anyone that can address the effect of Proposition 209 that abolished Affirmative Action in California. He said that the abolishment led to many problems for those seeking careers or getting into college.

Mr. Lewis stated that Proposition 209 affected all California cities in the sense that it became much more difficult for city personnel departments to establish specific hiring goals related to diversity. He asked Chief Chavez what Charter changes he would recommend.

Chief Chavez responded that the City has "the rule of one" for entry level and promotion. This means that how one does on a test determines one's promotability or ability to be hired. No other factor other than how one does on the test can be taken into account. One can not look at past performance or evaluations. For promotions, he said he would like to see more latitude to take in factors other than a one-day test score. For entry level, he would like to see more than just how one candidate did on a test. He commented that the City of Stockton is probably the only city in the State to still utilize the rule of one.

Pastor Haley said that minority employees are subject to treatment and pressure related to racism and asked Officer Robinson how the Department handles this.

Officer Robinson said that there are no programs to deal with this, adding that he has not felt any pressure in his ten years of service.

Pastor Haley countered that he feels that officers are pressured to be harder on African-Americans to prove themselves. He said that this issue should be reviewed.

Mayor Podesto asked for questions from the audience related to hiring and recruitment.

A member of the audience asked how many in the statistics shown are females.

Officer Robinson said that he did not bring figures with him but there are about twenty-seven women in the Police Department.

Terry Parker, Deputy Director of Personnel, said that a recent report to the Civil Service Commission stated that there are thirty-three female officers in the Police Department at present.

A member of the audience asked how the Departments expect to recruit after having profiled minorities as the enemy. He asked that the City look into its training practices.

Chief Chavez said that he does not believe any race is being profiled and that applications are given to everyone who wants one.

Janet Lilly asked if there are plans in the future for a Police Academy on the South side of the City, perhaps at Edison or Franklin High Schools and what the prerequisites would be for those students.

Chief Chavez said there have been discussions with Stockton Unified School District in terms of expanding that program. The program has been at Bear Creek High School for almost three years as a pilot program. Stagg High School has also indicated an interest. He said that discussions are continuing. Related to prerequisites, he said they would be the same as for any other program – that the youth are interested, that they maintain a decent grade point average, have the support of their families, and be willing to get involved in community service. He noted that the March election would possibly affect program expansion.

Sheriff Baxter Dunn said that there are SROs in the schools in the unincorporated areas of the County. One of the greatest needs is for Spanish speaking officers. He reported that up until six months ago, he had not hired a deputy sheriff in ten years because of the transition from a jail operated by all deputy sheriffs to one operated by correctional officers. This program has worked well, with deputy sheriffs pulled out of the jail to fill patrol vacancies and being replaced by correctional officers. This process was to take three years, but in 1992 to 1994, due to a property tax shift, this process took about ten

years. All deputy sheriffs have now been moved out of the jail and this has been the first opportunity to hire new deputy sheriffs to obtain better diversity and more Spanish-speaking sheriffs. Thirty officers were brought on this past week and 40% of those were minorities and recruitment has been heavy in the East Stockton area. He added that an all Spanish speaking Citizen's Academy had been created for young people in the last years of high school or just out of school to bridge the gap between those ages and the age of 21, and to attract those people to the Police Department. He cited the recruiting mechanisms presented earlier by Mr. Lloyd.

Mayor Podesto noted that the City and County are facing a deficit similar to that of 1992-1994.

Judge Bill Murray maintained that not enough people voted against Proposition 209 so the benefits of Affirmative Action were lost. He said that it is important to vote on ballot measures as they arise.

Mayor Podesto noted that there are 250,000 people in the City and perhaps 33,000 will vote in March. He said that Proposition 209 affects all in the City.

A member of the audience asked how programs could be changed to meet the objectives of including minorities. He agreed that those qualified for service may not test well.

Mayor Podesto responded that the City must follow its Charter, which can only be changed by a vote of the people.

Kathy Halsey of SBC Pacific Bell spoke on work force diversity related to employment.. At Pacific Bell, diversity is defined as differences, variety, and uniqueness. Specific diversity principles have been established to ensure that the company is continuously strengthened with the best people from a variety of backgrounds without any form of discrimination. She cited awards received by SBC in this regard. She said that customer service is provided in seven languages, and SBC's workforce is 53% female, 37% people of color. The management team is 48% female, 29% people of color. She encouraged people to apply to their telecommunications team through their web site at www.sbc.com or a toll free number, 1-800-924-JOBS (5627). She outlined other recruitment efforts. She said that supplier diversity programs are an integral part of SBC's strategic plan and SBC has also received awards related to this. She outlined how suppliers can become part of a database to be accessed by participating utilities. She announced that fliers are available for additional information.

Diane Fregiarro, Administrative Services Manager of the Public Library spoke on One Book, One Stockton, a community program to read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, chosen by the Mayor as the first book in this program. Winning ticket numbers were announced for copies of the book. She stated that the kickoff celebration at Barnes & Noble Book Store was a great success.

Cathy Harris, Senior Personnel Analyst for San Joaquin County, stated that she oversees the Policy and Procedure Unit and outreach programs for Human Resources. She stated there are over 6,000 County employees who are governed by the Civil Service Process. There are written and oral testing processes to establish an eligible list, generally good for one year. She spoke of two aspects of recruitment, external and internal. She noted they had their first job fair in August, and local colleges were also invited to attend to talk about education opportunities. The effort was partnered with San Joaquin County WorkNet, offering seminars on the County's hiring process, resumes, and interview tips. Advertisement occurred through the media, including television, *The Record* and radio. Fliers were distributed at County community service centers. There were special mailings and a community focus meeting. Over 2,000 people attended the job fair and over 800 applications were received. She noted that specialized recruitment occurs for hard-to-fill positions. A web site is also utilized. There is now on-line application capability. Kiosks are being established to apply for County jobs. There is a 24-hour jobline and advertising is done in various publications. Staff are sent to participate at job fairs and other events as well as educational facilities, including local high schools. The County has worked on seminars in conjunction with the Employment Development Department. Special recruitments have been done targeting the need for diverse languages. County departments are encouraged to hire youth from the WorkNet Summer Youth Program. Starting in January 2002, the County has initiated a mandatory diversity-training program. The County also has a mentor program where managers and supervisors partner with employees. Ms. Harris announced that the County has recently moved to the rule of five due to Civil Service changes and is going towards the rule of rank and the rule of the list. This occurs when there is a classification that is approved by the Civil Service Commission that requires a special certification or a licensure for a position. Ms. Harris announced that there have been talks with the Sheriff's Department about partnering on a CD video to hand out at job fairs with information on the Department.

Ms. Lilly asked how long the hiring process takes, and was told that the process takes about 22 to 25 days, from the final filing date to the testing process and then finalizing the score and establishing the list. Ms. Lilly said that every department should examine their hiring goals and she would like to see more mentoring and training programs.

Mayor Podesto said that figures are available on racial diversity in hiring.

Sherry McBride, Director of Human Resources for Diamond of California, said that diversity is an integral part of their workplace. She spoke on hiring opportunities and the retention of a diverse workforce by Diamond. She said that Diamond utilizes many of the recruitment and hiring techniques as outlined earlier. As they are an agricultural-based company, there are many job opportunities at harvest time that often turn into full time employment. Invitations are extended to community organizations to come to Diamond and discuss employment opportunities. Many of the programs mentioned tonight are used by Diamond related to outreach. To retain a diverse workforce, on-the-job training is offered, along with career pathing, and education reimbursement programs. Family members are invited to do job shadowing. Diamond is also looking

into a cultural sharing and education program to appreciate ethnicity and generation diversity. An ESL (English as a Second Language) program is being instituted. Ms. McBride said that Diamond has a very formalized open door policy to incorporate diverse ideas into their plans for the future. She shared a Diamond core value that "People are our Strength."

Mayor Podesto commented that diversity must begin at the City and County government levels.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

ULYSSES HALL

Mr. Hall expressed his appreciation for the forum on racial harmony and stressed the unity of mankind and the importance that all be treated fairly.

VIC HARRIS

Mr. Harris said that black men have a problem and need help through jobs. He said that many black students cannot read or write and they also need help.

GRANT LOUIS ASHLEY

Mr. Ashley said that low socioeconomic members of the community should be focused on and assisted.

JOE WARREN

Mr. Warren complained about the City's method of testing for City positions, stating that he was told he is too aggressive to be a City employee.

REVEREND WILLIE DOUGLAS

Mr. Douglas said that the way things have been must be dealt with, as there has been a systemic discrimination to deprive people of their opportunities. He said that good role models are needed to whom youth can relate.

REVEREND BOB HALEY

Reverent Haley said that many young men have records that prevent them from applying for jobs. He stated that a solution needs to be found for this. He said that most blacks and Hispanics have had run-ins with the Police Department and he asked for fair treatment. He contended some police officers should be removed.

Mr. Wilhoit said that every citizen should have rights. He recounted that the Youth Authority had a program at one time that involved a number of industries that provided jobs for inmates, but the public demanded that the legislature get tough on crime and money was taken away from rehabilitation programs. He said that the public must decide if it wants to train those in the penal system or just house them.

CLOSING

Mayor Podesto said that the next meeting would be in February with a topic to be announced. The Racial Harmony Task Force meeting of January 9, 2002 ended at 8:30 p.m.

::ODMA\GRPWISE\COS.CC.CC_Library:20511.1